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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

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State Dept. review completed

13 March 1969

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Approved For Release 2004/01/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013300020001-1

Approved For Release 2004/01/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013300020001-1

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No. 0062/69
13 March 1969

Central Intelligence Bulletin

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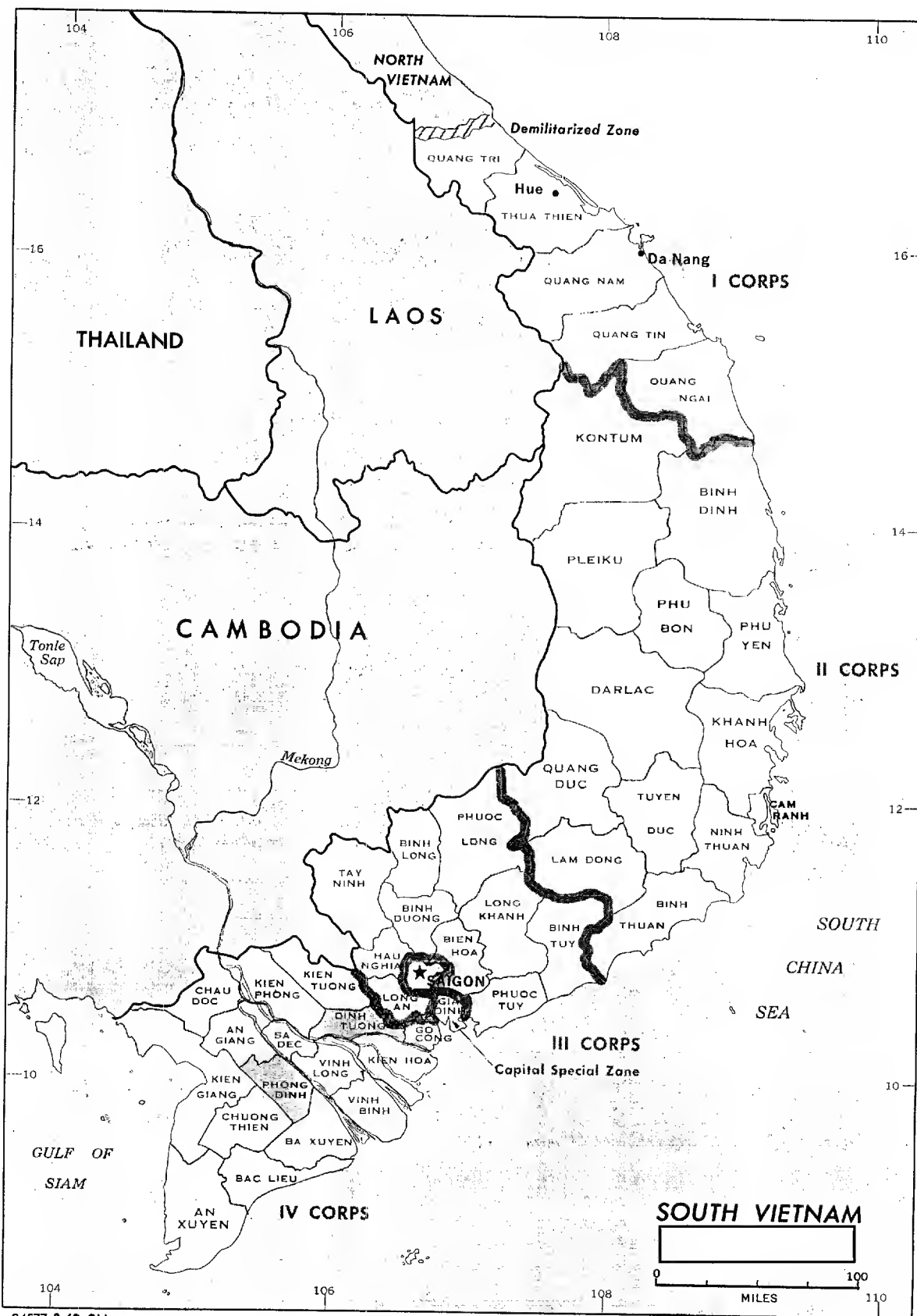
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South Vietnam: The military situation in South Vietnam was relatively quiet during the past 24 hours.

There was a marked decline in Communist-initiated activity in all sections of the country except the IV Corps area. There the Communists launched scattered mortar and rocket attacks against various urban centers and fought sharp ground actions with allied units in Dinh Tuong and Phong Dinh provinces.

Elsewhere in South Vietnam, the level of shelling fell off and there were no major infantry clashes reported. The situation in Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang apparently was calm.  (Map) 

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Japan: Prime Minister Sato is still trying to hold open his negotiating options on the status of US bases in Okinawa after the Ryukyus revert to Japan, but counterpressures are rising.

Sato has tried to correct press distortions of remarks he made in the Diet earlier this week. The press reported that he now favors bringing the Okinawan bases under the same restrictions that apply to bases in Japan proper. These restrictions bar nuclear weapons and require prior consultations on deployments of major forces. The tone of Sato's speech suggested that he intends to work toward a nuclear-free Okinawa, but he did not commit himself to this position.

Sato probably has strong reservations about his ability to persuade the Japanese public to accept nuclear weapons in Okinawa following reversion, and the current publicity presumably has reinforced his doubts. Additionally, there is serious dissension over the issue within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. These considerations ultimately may force Sato to negotiate for the reversion of the Ryukyus without nuclear weapons.

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West Germany: Bonn is planning diplomatic moves to head off any further East German actions against its access to West Berlin.

Foreign Ministry Executive Secretary Gerhard Ritzel told US Embassy officials on 11 March that the immediate West German objective is to prevent or further limit East German restrictions on freight shipments to or from West Berlin. There have been several instances of East Germans halting trucks which they charged were carrying military goods.

Ritzel added that over the longer run, Bonn hopes to pursue further with the USSR the line--taken earlier by Foreign Minister Brandt and Chancellor Kiesinger--that the West Germans are willing to make concessions on political aspects of their ties with West Berlin if in return the Communists accept the fact that Bonn has legitimate economic relations with the city and ease access conditions. The relative restraint shown by the Communists in responding to the presidential election has led West German leaders to hope, perhaps overoptimistically, that the way is open for further development of their Eastern contacts.

Moscow, for its part, acknowledges that economic links between Bonn and Berlin are proper, and probably would welcome an indication that West Germany is again willing to bargain over access arrangements. A Soviet diplomat said last week that Moscow anticipated such a move and would suggest that Bonn take up the matter with East Germany.

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Rumania: Party and state chief Ceausescu has announced some minor shifts in personnel that will serve to further strengthen his position.

A central committee plenum on 11 March moved to increase from six to seven the number of deputy premiers in the Council of Ministers and from three to four the number of vice presidents in the Council of State. Among the appointments announced were those of D. Popescu and M. Manescu to the Council of State, which Ceausescu has headed since late 1967. Each is a party secretary and a strong supporter of Ceausescu. Manescu recently headed an economic delegation to Moscow for talks on CEMA.

Other changes include the removal of Gaston-Maris from the Council of Ministers. His career has seemingly suffered an almost steady decline since early 1965. Also, Leonte Rautu was "kicked upstairs" to a deputy premiership, in which post he will be more than ever a "de-fanged" dogmatist. Rautu's previous position of party secretary will be filled by a stronger but as yet unnamed Ceausescu supporter.

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Chile: The clash last Sunday between police forces and illegal squatters on government land is developing into a major political issue.

Only the conservative National Party has supported the government's action in the Puerto Montt incident, which left eight persons dead and scores injured. The Communists, Socialists, and Radicals issued statements blaming the affair on the "repressive" policy of Interior Minister Perez Zujovic. The Christian Democratic Youth and the Student Federation of the University of Chile echoed these sentiments. The Christian Democratic Party has since disavowed the youth group's statement and suspended the group's leadership. Some leftist Christian Democrats, however, have dissociated themselves from the government's action.

The government has declared the existence of "threats of subversion" and has alerted all security forces. Students at the University of Chile clashed with police on 10 March as the students seized the faculty of economics in downtown Santiago. The minister of interior reportedly expects additional violence.

The incident in Puerto Montt is a convenient issue for the Communists and Socialists to use in their attempts to polarize Chilean politics into a confrontation between "popular forces" and a "repressive government."

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Jamaica: Violence against US and other foreign personnel has been building up, and the life of US Ambassador Tobriner has now been threatened.

Two Americans have been shot by unknown assailants in the past few weeks, the wife of an important British official was severely beaten on 8 March, and the home of the Venezuelan ambassador was robbed on 10 March.

It is not clear whether white foreigners are deliberate targets; at least two recent attacks involved prominent Jamaicans. The possibility nevertheless exists that some persons are being stirred up by black power advocates or other radicals. Black power and racist groups have become increasingly active in Jamaica during the past year and appear to have contributed to a rise of antiwhite sentiment.

The Jamaican Government has mounted police and military raids in an effort to cope with deteriorating security conditions. The US Embassy is also taking special precautions to protect official personnel.

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